



# INTER ALIA...

The Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia

August/September  
Volume 1, Issue 6

## A Message from the Attorney General

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### Colleagues -

There is much to look forward to as we head into the latter months of 2005. Beginning on October 1st, OAG will welcome nearly 90 Agency Counsel into the OAG family. This is as a result of the Budget Support Act passed in July of this year. The measure placed all Legal Service Attorneys, working in 24 subordinate agencies, under the umbrella of the OAG. This transition is the realization of a plan put in place shortly after our

reorganization. The Agency Counsel Transition Team – a group of 22 OAG Agency Counsel attorneys and staff — are working to ensure the transition goes smoothly.

Bringing nearly a 100 Agency Counsel into the fold is no small task, and it will be a collaborative effort. Members of the Transition Team are interviewing *each* Agency Director and Agency Counsel, in addition to interviewing agency program staff to gather information about staffing, budget, Information Technology, Library resources, training and more. Gathering this information will help me to understand how best to integrate all Agency Counsel into OAG.

The improved efficiency of our office has also allowed OAG the ability to take on a very important, and very active, partnership with Terrell Junior High School. As you may already be aware, OAG employees toiled long hours in the school's library this

summer to it get up and functioning in time for the start of the new school year. The OAG Labor-Management Partnership has also adopted Terrell as part of The Terrell Junior High School Higher Achievement Project ("HAP"), has the support of both labor and management at OAG. I thank all of the volunteers for the work they are doing on behalf of the students at Terrell.

— Robert J. Spagnoletti



"Although we had to work in sweltering conditions, the transformation of the library has been well worth the effort.."

AAG Joel Armstrong

BEFORE....

## Cases and Legislation



The Consumer Protection Antitrust Section is guarding the interests of District residents. The Section is keeping an eye on several check cashing and payday loan businesses to make sure they are not using aggressive collection tactics against consumers who have taken out loans. Recently Assistant Attorney General Wendy Weinberg sent more than a hundred letters to area businesses reminding them they cannot automatically withdraw money from a consumer's account. Payday loans must allow for the deferred deposit of a check. For more information, go online to [www.oag.dc.gov](http://www.oag.dc.gov), and click on News Room.



Great job by the Civil Litigation Division. Judge W. Jackson granted the District's Motion for Summary Judgment in *Island Development Corporation v. District of Columbia*. The Plaintiff claimed \$491 million dollars in lost profits for an alleged breach of contract with the District to develop two parcels of land: Children's Island and King-

man's Island. The Court agreed with the District that the claimed lease was unenforceable.

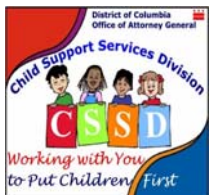


The Council of the District of Columbia will soon be back from recess, and OAG is expected to take an active role in the upcoming legislative session. The Committee on the Judiciary has scheduled hearings on several measures introduced to the Council, and has invited OAG to testify. Here are just a few:

- Bill 16-335, "Protection of District of Columbia Public Officials and Employees Act of 2005" on 9/22 at 10 a.m.
- Bill 16-381, "Anti-Prostitution Vehicle Impoundment Amendment Act of 2005" on 9/22 at 10 a.m.
- Bill 16-241, "District of Columbia Community Protection Act of 2005" on 10/5 at 11 a.m.

Hearings are televised on DC Cable, Channel 13.

## Notables



The Child Support Services Division (CSSD) of the Office of the Attorney General for the District of Columbia recently held a hugely successful **Child Support Amnesty Program 2005** – more than doubling collection expectations. Amnesty was offered from August 1<sup>st</sup> – August 13<sup>th</sup>, and more than 1,600 non-custodial parents took advantage of the program. Nearly \$240,000 dollars in support payments were collected on behalf of the children of the District of Columbia. Hundreds of employers also committed to make future payments through wage withholdings. More than 11,000 letters were sent to non-custodial parents in the District who were eligible for Amnesty – parents who owe back due child support and have not made payment arrangements – totaling some \$174 million dollars in arrears.

Benidia Rice, Director of CSSD, says that although **The Child Support Amnesty Program 2005** has resulted in a financial boost for the District's children, it's about more than just money. "We are very pleased with the turnout. The fact that hundreds of parents have stepped up to pay support, means that more kids are assured of having both parents actively involved in their lives. These parents now know that the child support agency is not a barrier from seeing their kids because they are behind on their child support payments." **The Child Support Amnesty Program 2005** was tri-jurisdictional effort between the District of Columbia, Arlington County and the entire state of Maryland. Ms. Rice said it could not have been done without the dedicated staff at CSSD. "The effort would not have been successful but for the dedicated team of child support professionals who expended countless hours, over and beyond the norm, to ensure the amnesty program ended with the District exceeding its

collection goal of \$100,000.00," said Ms. Rice. Anyone who was eligible for amnesty, but did not participate in the program, could face arrest.



Dep. Mayor Herbert R. Tillery, CSSD Director Benidia Rice, and AG Spagnoletti during the July 29, 2005 Kickoff for Amnesty on Free-



## Terrell JHS Partnership

The Office of the Attorney General (OAG) is making great strides in its partnership with Terrell Junior High School. Among other things, OAG joined forces with a local consulting firm to beautify and refurbish the library at Terrell, which included discarding tons of outdated books and furnishings, cleaning the remaining books and book shelves, replacing the coverings for the windows, painting the walls and trim, and obtaining new furniture. This effort, which continued throughout the summer, concluded on August 27<sup>th</sup> – two days before school started.

“Although we had to work in sweltering conditions, the transformation of the library has been well worth the effort,” stated Joel Armstrong, an attorney in the OAG and one of the members of the steering committee for the project. Cheryl Ziegler, another member of the steering committee added: “The number of OAG employees who turned out to work on the library exceeded all of our expectations, and we spent well over 300 man hours working on the library this summer.”

When school begins, OAG will start two new initiatives with the principal aim of improving student test scores. The first of these initiatives is the “Saturday Academy,” which will be

limited to 25 students and will meet every Saturday during the school year. Using math and reading software and with the assistance of OAG tutors, Saturday Academy students will work at their own pace to improve these essential skills in a fun and challenging environment. In addition, as part of the Saturday Academy, the students will be exposed to esteem-building and cultural activities each week. This format was selected because, among other things, it does not require OAG staff to be experts in the subject matter being taught, or to create lesson plans in order to participate. The software will allow OAG volunteers to more accurately track the progress of the students over the course of the year.

The second initiative by OAG is a reading book club, which will meet once a month in the new and improved library to discuss books of interest to the students. Unlike the Saturday Academy, the reading book club will be open to all students. It is hoped that the book club will encourage students to read and will improve their reading comprehension skills.

Steering committee member, Angela Harvey said there is a great deal of enthusiasm for the Terrell Partnership. “These new initiatives, which were developed in consultation with

### YOU CAN HELP

- Volunteers are always needed for the Terrell JHS Partnership. Please contact Cheryl Ziegler, Angela Harvey or Joel Armstrong for more information. Please help make this the best school year ever for the kids at Terrell.

Terrell’s principal, are very exciting,” said Ms. Harvey. “We believe that these initiatives will have a very positive impact on the students at Terrell.”

— *By Deputy Attorney General, Cheryl Ziegler*

**A NEW LIBRARY!!! AND  
A GREAT PLACE TO STUDY FOR THE KIDS AT  
TERRELL JHS**

**AFTER.....**



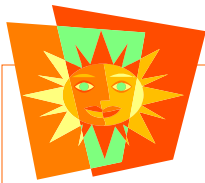
## Congratulations



AAG Keith Coleman earned his LLM from GW in Gov. Contracts and Procurement!!



FSD Section Chief Sara Gold, her husband Ori, and big sister Lily, welcomed baby Sam in July.



# September 2005

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5 Labor Day	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	



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The Office of the Attorney General  
for the District of Columbia (OAG)  
handles all suits instituted by or  
against the District of Columbia.



Our condolences to Darlene Field on  
the loss of her father, Frank Field.